

# MONTANA STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

*Literature, a primary vehicle for teaching reading, attempts to show life in its uncertainties, complexities, and imperfections, offering many insights for the reader. Responding to print and nonprint media allows participants to experience vicariously other lives and to measure their own experiences against those of others. The exploration of literature and films encourages students to become critical and reflective thinkers and to develop personal aesthetic standards for print and nonprint media as art forms.*

Content Standards indicate what all students should know, understand and be able to do in a specific content area.

Benchmarks define our expectations for students' knowledge, skills and abilities along a developmental continuum in each content area. That continuum is focused at three points—at the end of grade 4, the end of grade 8 and grade 12.

**Content Standard 1—Students construct meaning as they comprehend, interpret, analyze and respond to literary works.**

**Content Standard 2—Students recognize and evaluate how language, literary devices, and elements contribute to the meaning and impact of literary works.**

**Content Standard 3—Students reflect upon their literary experiences and purposefully select from a range of works.**

**Content Standard 4—Students interact with print and nonprint literary works from various cultures, ethnic groups, traditional and contemporary viewpoints written by both genders.**

**Content Standard 5—Students use literary works to enrich personal experience and to connect to the broader world of ideas, concepts and issues.**

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## Literature Content Standard 1

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**Students construct meaning as they comprehend, interpret, analyze and respond to literary works.**

### **Rationale**

*The “meaning” of a piece of work is not a rigid, unchanging interpretation by an expert. Meanings depend upon readers, upon the times, and upon the interaction of reader and literary work. Authors provide clues, judgments, and insights about life that influence a reader’s attitude. Students actively engage with text to build their own understanding. Thus, students understand what they read as it relates to what they know.*

### **Benchmarks**

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
1. make predictions and connections between new literary works and previous information/experiences.	1. make predictions and connections between new literary works and previous information/experiences and explore questions about the impact of literary elements.	1. propose and pursue questions and answers to the complex elements of literary works (e.g., historical and cultural influence, style, figures of speech).
2. identify main ideas and some supporting details of literary works.	2. identify and comprehend the main idea and supporting facts and details, and summarize ideas in own words.	2. develop and define with textual support interpretations of complex literary works.
3. retell key events of literary works in sequence.	3. summarize stories and identify major literary elements.	3. analyze the major elements significant to the interpretation process (e.g., point of view, tone, dramatic action).
4. make connections and comparisons of literary elements within and between works.	4. compare, contrast, and make connections of literary elements within and between works.	4. recognize, compare, contrast, make connections, and analyze approaches to literary elements in various works.
5. make, confirm, or revise predictions based on the literary works.	5. draw inferences and conclusions based on literary works.	5. compare and contrast individual and group responses/reactions with author’s purpose/intent.
6. respond personally to ideas and feelings generated by literary works.	6. respond to literary works on the basis of personal insights and respect the different responses of others.	6. demonstrate oral, written, and/or artistic responses to ideas and feelings generated in literary works.

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## Literature Content Standard 2

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**Students recognize and evaluate how language, literary devices, and elements contribute to the meaning and impact of literary works.**

### **Rationale**

*Recognizing how language is used to create meaning and achieve response helps readers gain critical power and assists them as communicators; furthermore, an understanding of language can deepen one's appreciation of literature.*

### **Benchmarks**

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
1. identify literary devices (e.g., figurative language, exaggeration).	1. identify the effect of literary devices (e.g., figurative language, allusion, diction, dialogue, description, imagery).	1. discuss ways in which literary devices and elements (e.g., syntax, imagery, figurative language, allusion, symbols, irony) produce a dominant tone, effect or theme.
2. demonstrate an understanding of literary elements (e.g., plot, character, setting, problem solving).	2. recognize the impact of literary elements (e.g., plot, theme, character, setting, point of view) and evaluate their effectiveness.	2. analyze and critique the effectiveness of an author's choice of literary devices/elements.
3. increase vocabulary through the use of context clues and reference sources (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, glossary) to understand literary works.	3. evaluate how vocabulary and language contribute to literary works.	3. recognize and articulate how language enhances meaning and conveys power to impact an individual and/or society.
4. identify how language, literary devices, and forms contribute to the meaning of literary works.	4. demonstrate an understanding of how language, literary devices, and forms contribute to the impact of literary works.	4. evaluate how language, literary devices, and forms contribute to the impact of a work on the reader/listener/viewer.

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## Literature Content Standard 3

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**Students reflect upon their literary experiences and purposefully select from a range of works.**

### **Rationale**

*Learning to purposefully select literature to read and films to view which meet individual needs empowers individuals to take charge of their own development, to manage their time, to extend horizons, to challenge favorite viewpoints, to share other lives, to illuminate individual experiences and to grow as lifelong learners.*

### **Benchmarks**

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. select a variety of literary works for purposes of discovery, appreciation, and enjoyment.</li><li>2. select print/nonprint works based upon reflection of prior literary experiences (e.g., author, subject, theme, genre).</li><li>3. demonstrate the understanding that the purposes of experiencing literary works include personal satisfaction and the development of lifelong literature appreciation.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. select a variety of literary works, expressing reasons for personal recommendation, discovery, appreciation, and enjoyment.</li><li>2. apply given criteria to evaluate literary merit and express critical opinions about literary works.</li><li>3. demonstrate the understanding that the purposes of experiencing literary works include personal satisfaction and the development of lifelong literature appreciation.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. use prior experience to select materials and articulate purposes for selection (e.g., learn, enjoy, persuade, exchange information).</li><li>2. develop and apply criteria to evaluate the reliability, authenticity, and literary merit of information conveyed in a literary work.</li><li>3. recognize literary works as vehicles for acquiring new information, responding to social and workplace needs, and discovering and gaining personal fulfillment.</li></ol>

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## Literature Content Standard 4

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**Students interact with print and nonprint literary works from various cultures, ethnic groups, traditional and contemporary viewpoints written by both genders.**

### **Rationale**

*Through the ages, literature has mirrored the sensibilities of the people who have produced those works. Students engaging in a variety of works come to understand that viewpoints, attitudes, and ideas change; that individuals view events in a variety of ways based upon their own frames of reference, beliefs, and experiences.*

### **Benchmarks**

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. select, read, listen to, and view a variety of literary works.</li><li>2. respond to traditional and contemporary works representing diverse perspectives, cultures, and issues (e.g., American Indian works).</li><li>3. create and share responses to literary works through the application of technology, speaking, writing, and visual, and performing arts (e.g., discuss, write, move, design, compose, sing).</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. select, read, listen to, and view a variety of literary works.</li><li>2. respond to traditional and contemporary works representing diverse perspectives, cultures, and issues (e.g., American Indian works).</li><li>3. create and share responses to literary works through the application of technology, speaking, writing, visual, and performing arts (e.g., discuss, write, move, design, compose, sing).</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. select, read, listen to, and view a variety of traditional and contemporary works from diverse cultures (e.g., American Indian works), genders, genres, historical periods, and styles.</li><li>2. demonstrate how factors of history and culture, gender and genre, influence and give meaning to literature.</li><li>3. create and share responses to literary works (e.g., discuss, write, move, design, compose, sing, dramatize, produce multi-media presentations).</li><li>4. analyze diverse literature to identify and compare common human experiences within and between cultures.</li></ol>

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## Literature Content Standard 5

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**Students use literary works to enrich personal experience and to connect to the broader world of ideas, concepts and issues.**

### Rationale

*Literature is a primary vehicle to widen and extend our experiences, to make us more aware of other individuals, issues, cultures and viewpoints and, thus, ourselves, our own cultures and our own attitudes. Literature moves us out of our personal spheres and extends our understanding as we change.*

### Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
1. identify how culture, ideas, and issues influence literary works.	1. examine and explain how history, culture, ideas, and issues influence literary works.	1. examine, explain, and evaluate various perspectives concerning community, national, and world issues reflected in literary works.
2. compare one's culture to the culture portrayed in a literary work.	2. compare and contrast a variety of perspectives of self, others, and world issues through a selection of literary works.	2. identify and respond to philosophical assumptions and basic beliefs underlying selected texts.
3. make associations between ideas expressed in literary works and personal experiences.	3. use literary works to develop an understanding of the many dimensions of human experience (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic).	3. recognize patterns, symbols, and universal themes present across literary works and relate those to personal experience.  4. investigate and report ways in which authors, their works, and their styles have impacted or been influenced by social and cultural issues or events.

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## Literature Standards: A Profile of Four Levels

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**The Literature Performance Standards describe students' knowledge, skills, and abilities in the literature content area on a continuum from kindergarten through grade 12. These descriptions provide a picture or profile of student achievement at the four performance levels—advanced, proficient, nearing proficiency, and novice.**

<i><u>Advanced</u></i>	This level denotes superior performance.
<i><u>Proficient</u></i>	This level denotes solid academic performance for each benchmark. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.
<i><u>Nearing Proficiency</u></i>	This level denotes that the student has partial mastery or prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient work at each benchmark.
<i><u>Novice</u></i>	This level denotes that the student is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for work at each benchmark.

### **Grade 4 Literature**

**Advanced:** (1) A fourth-grade student at the advanced level of literature demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) accurately comprehends material at the literal level and sometimes at the figurative level;
- (b) makes predictions and connections within and between literary works;
- (c) interprets as a reader, listener, and viewer how language affects the meaning of literary works;
- (d) confidently identifies the language and literary tools that contribute to the meaning;
- (e) evaluate how language and literary tools contribute to the impact of literary works;
- (f) purposefully selects print and non-print material from diverse cultures and viewpoints to fulfill needs; and
- (g) demonstrates the depth of understanding by sharing responses to a variety of literary works.

**Proficient:** (1) A fourth-grade student at the proficient level of literature demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) comprehends materials at the literal level, but has difficulty at the figurative level;
- (b) makes predictions and connections within and between literary works;
- (c) demonstrates an understanding of how language affects the meaning of literary works as a reader, listener, and viewer;
- (d) identifies the language and literary tools that contribute to meaning;
- (e) purposefully selects print and non-print materials from diverse cultures and viewpoints to fulfill needs; and
- (f) explores creative ways to share appropriate and unique responses to a variety of literary works.

**Nearing Proficiency:** (1) A fourth-grade student at the nearing proficiency level of literature demonstrates partial mastery of prerequisite skills and knowledge fundamental for proficiency in literature. He/she:

- (a) usually comprehends material at the literal level;
- (b) makes obvious predictions and connections within and between those works;
- (c) demonstrates an understanding of how language affects the meaning of literary works as a reader, listener, and viewer;
- (d) usually identifies the language and literary tools that contribute to the meaning of literary works;

- (e) sometimes purposefully selects print and non-print materials from diverse cultures and viewpoints to fulfill needs; and
- (f) occasionally explores creative ways to share responses to a variety of literary works, but often relies on predictable or mechanical methods.

**Novice:** (1) A fourth-grade student at the novice level of literature is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark in literature. He/she:

- (a) seldom comprehends material at the literal level;
- (b) makes obvious predictions and connections, with assistance, within and between literary works;
- (c) occasionally identifies how language affects the meaning of literary works as a reader, listener, and viewer;
- (d) has difficulty identifying and/or discussing the language and literary tools that contribute to meaning;
- (e) randomly selects print and nonprint material from diverse cultures and viewpoints; and
- (f) uses limited methods to share responses to a variety of literary works.

## **Grade 8 Literature**

**Advanced:** (1) An eighth-grade student at the advanced level of literature demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) accurately comprehends material at the literal level and frequently at the figurative level;
- (b) makes complex predictions and meaningful connections when analyzing and responding to literary works;
- (c) consistently and thoughtfully interprets and evaluates as a reader, listener, and viewer how literary devices, forms, and language impact literary works;
- (d) willingly and confidently responds to a variety of works demonstrating individualized generalizations and thoughtful comparisons and hypotheses; and
- (e) expresses a clear, personalized criteria for evaluation of judgments of quality.

**Proficient:** (1) An eighth-grade student at the proficient level of literature demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) comprehends material at the literal level and is gaining understanding at the figurative level;
- (b) effectively uses sequencing, comparing, contrasting and predicting to analyze and respond to literary works;
- (c) competently identifies and interprets how literary devices, forms, and language impact literary works as a reader, listener, and viewer;
- (d) consistently and purposefully selects a variety of literary works, expressing reasons for the choices; and
- (e) recognizes how the time period and other relevant situations produce a work's context.

**Nearing Proficiency:** (1) An eighth-grade student at the nearing proficiency level of literature demonstrates partial mastery of prerequisite skills and knowledge fundamental for proficiency in literature. He/she:

- (a) usually comprehends material at the literal level and sometimes, with assistance, at the figurative level;
- (b) makes obvious predictions and brief descriptions when analyzing and responding to literary works;
- (c) identifies literary devices, forms, and language, and describes how these impact literary works as a reader, listener, and viewer;
- (d) purposefully selects a variety of literary works, briefly expressing reasons for choices; and
- (e) occasionally shares responses to literature, demonstrating knowledge of literary form and structure.

**Novice:** (1) An eighth-grade student at the novice level of literature is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark in literature. He/she:

- (a) usually comprehends material at the literal level but seldom at the figurative level;
- (b) makes simple predictions and brief descriptions when responding to literary works;
- (c) infrequently identifies literary devices, forms, and languages and, with assistance, describes how these impact literary works as a reader, listener, and viewer;



- (d) selects literary works, yet has difficulty expressing reasons for choices; and
- (e) often focuses on restatement of story and summarization with little comparison or investigation of the work's meaning or form.

### **Upon Graduation Literature**

**Advanced:** (1) A graduating student at the advanced level of literature demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) accurately and completely comprehends material at both literal and figurative levels;
- (b) seeks out increasingly complex and diverse material;
- (c) develops and defends multiple-analytic and interpretive responses to those works;
- (d) demonstrates the inquiry process through the articulation of greater insight and higher level skills;
- (e) connects prior literary experiences to purposeful selection and evaluation of material based on reliability, authenticity, and literary merit; and
- (f) experiments with a range of original and sophisticated ways to communicate independently designed responses to a variety of literary works.

**Proficient:** (1) A graduating student at the proficient level of literature demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) comprehends material at both literal and figurative levels;
- (b) develops and defends multiple-analytic and interpretive responses to literary works;
- (c) analyzes and critiques how language and literary tools create and enhance the meaning and impact of literary works as a reader, listener, and viewer;
- (d) thoughtfully uses prior experience to purposefully select material to fulfill needs;
- (e) applies criteria to evaluate the reliability, authenticity, and merit of literary works; and
- (f) consistently creates and shares unique and reasonable responses to a variety of literary works.

**Nearing Proficiency:** (1) A graduating student at the nearing proficiency level of literature demonstrates partial mastery of prerequisite skills and knowledge fundamental for proficiency in literature. He/she:

- (a) comprehends material at the literal level but only occasionally at the figurative level;
- (b) develops and pursues questions and answers in his/her responses to literary works;
- (c) recognizes and discusses how language and literary tools influence the meaning and impact of literary works as a reader, listener, and viewer;
- (d) uses prior experience to select material;
- (e) occasionally applies criteria that assesses reliability, authenticity, and literary merits; and
- (f) relies on more predictable and limited forms to share responses to a variety of literary works.

**Novice:** (1) A graduating student at the novice level of literature is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark in literature. He/she:

- (a) comprehends materials on the literal level, but rarely at the figurative level;
- (b) recognizes interpretive responses to literary works, but finds difficulty discussing the effectiveness of literary tools;
- (c) reluctantly interacts with literary works;
- (d) has difficulty connecting personal literary experiences to personal life experiences; and
- (e) waits for encouragement, hesitates to share, and usually limits responses to assigned products.